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Beyond induction: the CPD needs of early career teachers in Scotland

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ABSTRACT

CPD for teachers in Scotland, as in many other countries worldwide, is receiving increased attention. Within the Scottish context a gap in the CPD framework had been identified for early career teachers who have completed the induction year but are not yet eligible to embark on the Chartered Teacher Programme.

Learning and Teaching Scotland, the school curriculum development body for Scotland, therefore commissioned a research project to explore the CPD needs and priorities of these early career teachers and the barriers to their participation. The project employed a three staged methodology: nominal group technique interviews with teachers in four local authorities; a national online survey; and a stakeholder consultation exercise. Results indicate that the early career teachers have a wide range of different needs, in terms of both content and mode of CPD, yet they do not appear to feel strongly about barriers to their participation. The article concludes by outlining policy and practice implications arising from the research.

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Introduction

Continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers in Scotland, as in many other countries worldwide, has seen increasing investment in recent years, resulting in the development of a much more defined framework than existed previously. Teachers in Scotland are expected, and indeed contractually obliged, to work within the national CPD framework, a development influenced largely, although not exclusively, by the teachers' agreement *A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century* (SEED, 2001), commonly referred to as the 'McCrone Agreement'. A particular feature of the emerging CPD framework has been the statutory induction year for new teachers, which has been in place since 2002. The Teacher Induction Scheme has received much praise, and new teachers generally feel supported during their induction year. However, concern has been expressed over what happens to new teachers once they become fully registered at the end of the induction year. While procedures are in place for ongoing Professional Review and Development (PRD), there is currently no specific provision or support for teachers in years 2-6 of their teaching careers. At the end of year six teachers can begin to work towards the Standard for Chartered Teacher (SCT).

With this framework, and other policy initiatives such as the Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) (a Scotland-wide reform of the curriculum for learners aged 3-18) in mind, Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS), the curriculum development body, commissioned a team to investigate the CPD needs of teachers in years 2-6 of their careers (Kennedy *et al.* 2008). The objectives of the project were:

1. To seek the views of teachers in the post-probationary period of years two to six of their professional life on effective CPD they have received and to identify best practice modes and models of delivery;
2. To seek teachers' views on their CPD needs;
3. To seek teachers' views on the relative priorities of their CPD needs;
4. To seek teachers' views on barriers to their participation in CPD and make recommendations on how these barriers might be overcome;
5. To compare the views of these teachers with the views of other stakeholder groups such as head teachers, local authority employers and experts in CPD;
6. To develop recommendations that can be used by LT Scotland to guide the development of future programmes of CPD support.

The present article focuses principally on objectives 2, 3 and 4 above.

Context

Following unrest over teachers' pay and conditions in the late nineteen nineties, an independent review was established, resulting in 'A Teaching Profession for the 21st Century' ('The McCrone Agreement', SEED 2001). The Agreement sought to introduce new working conditions for teachers in return for a significant pay rise. A key aspect of the Agreement was the introduction of a CPD framework (SEED, 2003a) based on a series of standards: the Standard for Initial Teacher Education (mandatory for all teachers); the Standard for Full Registration (mandatory for all teachers within five years of qualifying, and thereafter serving as the baseline standard for continued registration); the Standard for Chartered Teacher (voluntary); and the Standard for Headship (mandatory for all new headteachers). The framework includes a guaranteed one-year training post for all newly qualified teachers in which probationer teachers are supported by nominated school mentors and have 70% class

contact with 30% of the working week devoted to professional development activities. All teachers are required to undertake, and account for, 35 hours of CPD per annum and are expected to engage in the Professional Review and Development (PRD) process (SEED 2003b) which involves maintaining a professional portfolio and having an annual PRD interview with a line manager. In addition, once they reach the top of the main grade pay-scale (six years) teachers can embark on the Chartered Teacher Programme if they wish. The General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) has also recently introduced procedures for teachers to gain professional recognition/registration in specific areas (GTCS 2007). This development recognises the need for flexibility in the profession through the facility for teachers to gain additional categories of registration; it also recognises the need for recognition of teachers' specialisms through the facility to gain 'professional recognition' which lasts for a period of five years, but is renewable subject to satisfactory evidence that the specialism is being maintained.

In considering the structure of the CPD framework in relation to the needs of teachers in years 2-6 of their careers, a number of observations can be made. New teachers are included in documents on CPD, PRD and professional recognition. The documents claim that the good practices and processes established in the induction year should continue through the CPD portfolio. The CPD framework and guidance on professional recognition outline clear career development pathways that can be undertaken. However, for teachers in years 2 and 3 of their careers there appears to be no specific CPD requirements/opportunities other than to engage in the PRD process: Professional Recognition/Registration requires two years' of post-induction experience, and the teachers cannot embark on the Chartered Teacher Programme until they reach the top of the main grade pay-scale (six years after qualification).

In identifying teachers as being in years 2-6 of their careers, this implies that all teachers follow a fairly standard pattern of induction year followed by full-time teaching. For a variety of new teachers this simply does not happen: some teachers take gap years, some choose to work part-time, some cannot find full-time posts, some undertake short-term supply cover posts, and some work towards full registration outwith the teacher induction scheme. For most of these teachers, engaging in sustained, progressive and planned CPD can be problematic. In addition, studies conducted by Draper *et al.* (1991, 1997, 1998 cited Wilson *et al.* 2006) highlight the potentially harmful effect of short-term contracts of employment during the probationary period on staff morale and on teachers' developing sense of professionalism. Although there are recommendations for the inclusion of supply teachers in the policy documentation, there may be inconsistent practice in schools and authorities. There could be serious implications in this inconsistency for new teachers who are employed as supply teachers.

In summary, the Scottish CPD framework is individually oriented and is based on a series of competence-based standards. Despite an acknowledgment of the diversity of possible CPD experiences, policy documents tend to privilege formal CPD opportunities over informal professional learning. The PRD process is acknowledged as being central to effective career-long CPD, and good habits can and should be embedded in the induction/early professional development phases. However, despite the existence of the PRD process as the backbone of Scottish CPD policy, there is nonetheless a gap in the framework for teacher in years 2 and 3. In addition, negotiating the CPD pathways established in the framework can be difficult for those teachers not in consistent, permanent, full-time employment.

CPD and EPD

While the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) defined CPD as ‘anything that has been undertaken to progress, assist or enhance a teacher’s professionalism’ (SEED 2003a, p. 2), it should be acknowledged that the discourse about professional development is typified by ‘conceptual vagueness’ (Coffield 2000, p. 3). Friedman and Philips (2004, p. 369) indicate that legitimacy of professional development activities is often perceived in terms of formal training courses linked to work or gaining a qualification – portable and bankable. However, an emerging paradigm is one that moves professional development away from the practice of attending courses and training days to the concept of lifelong or continuing learning which is undertaken in a variety of ways, and where emotional and social as well as intellectual and practical engagement are viewed as co-existing and co-dependent (Day, 2004).

The terms continuing professional development (CPD) and early professional development (EPD) are used throughout this article. An all-encompassing conception of CPD is adopted, articulated neatly by Day (1999):

Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives. (p. 4)

This definition adopts a developmental, learning-focused conception of CPD, but it is worth noting that CPD in general, and EPD in particular, are often associated with externally imposed accountability systems (Kennedy, 2007; Collinson *et al.*, 2009).

While the term EPD is used in much of the literature it should be noted that there is no agreed definition of what exactly constitutes EPD, other than that it occurs at the early stages of a teacher’s career. Most of the studies considered in this article use EPD to describe the two years after the induction year, but this is by no means universally agreed. For the purpose of the article, EPD can be considered to be the CPD undertaken by those teachers in the year 2-6 phase of their careers.

Teacher development

It is reasonable to assume that the lack of conceptual clarity relating to CPD, as suggested above, pertains to all stages of a teacher’s professional development, including the early professional development EPD stage. The concept of EPD is an emerging area of interest, with a fairly limited body of literature addressing this stage of development explicitly.

In their literature review of early professional learning, commissioned by the GTCS, Wilson *et al.* (2006) identified approximately 3500 articles about teachers’ CPD, only 13 of which related to early professional development specifically. They state that, apart from their own report, little has been written about the particular

needs of post-induction teachers. There has also been little attention paid to identifying the features of support which new teachers had found helpful and their literature search revealed no published studies relating directly to teachers' early professional learning following the completion of their compulsory induction period in Scotland.

Since Wilson *et al.*'s report in 2006, a large-scale Teaching and Learning Research Project (TLRP), led by Professor Jim McNally, has now reported. The focus of the project was on the early professional learning of teachers in Scotland, and the outcomes of the project focus principally on the development of new teachers' professional identities and the importance of informal learning in that process (McNally, 2006).

Outwith Scotland, an evaluation of the Early Professional Development Pilot Scheme in England, argues that key conditions for effective early professional development include: teacher autonomy; school support; mentor support; and LEA support (Moor *et al.* 2005).

The literature reviewed for the LTS project relates to teachers in the induction and early post-induction phase, mainly years two and three, and as such does not cover the range that is being investigated in the project brief. However, this perhaps indicates that the experiences and needs of years 2-6 cannot be seen to be covered by one perspective, rather the needs of a year two teacher are likely to be quite different from those of a year six teacher. In the Scottish context, the delineation of years 2-6 as a distinct career phase relates more to the structure of the Scottish CPD framework than it does to teacher development *per se*.

Teacher development is a complex process. There exist numerous attempts at understanding and classifying the process of teacher development, ranging from the linear model outlined by Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986) which suggests that teachers move along a spectrum of: novice; advanced beginner; competent; proficient; expert, through to more elaborate models such as that suggested by Ingvarson (1998), which sets out the following stages of development: provisional registration; entry/survival; confirmed registration; stabilization; master teacher; experimentation; leading teacher; and serenity.

Fuller (1969 cited Wilson *et al.* 2006) associates different concerns with different stages of a teacher's development. This theory has been the starting point for much teacher development research in the USA and the three stages he has identified are as follows: concern for self (primary survival as a teacher), concern for the task (focus on actual performance) and concern for impact (relating to positive influence on pupils). However, others (Pigge and Marso, 1997 in Wilson *et al.* 2006) have suggested that teachers are concerned about impact throughout their development and that this is not limited to one particular stage.

Models as described above tend to be fairly linear and in many cases appear to be based on structural considerations such as registration/licensing, with a focus on skill development. Huberman (1993) warns that while for some teachers the process may appear to be linear, 'for others there are stages, regressions, dead-ends and unpredictable changes of direction sparked by new realisations' (p. 4). Huberman (*ibid.*) is credited with proposing the first significant non-linear model of teacher development, based on a 5-stage career cycle. However, Day *et al.* (2007) draw a useful distinction between 'career stage' and 'professional development phase', arguing that to conceptualise teacher development in relation to career phases is narrow and restrictive. Instead they offer a model which identifies six 'professional life phases'. The model has been derived from empirical data from 300 teachers in

England involved in a government-funded study in which they were asked about their perceptions of their own identity, motivation, commitment and effectiveness. Interestingly, despite arguing that teacher development needs to be considered in a wider context than that of career stages, the professional life phases in the model correspond to years of teaching experience. For example, the first phase spans years 0-3 and, according to Day *et al.*, focuses on commitment, support and challenge. The next phases spans years 4-7 and focuses on identity and efficacy in the classroom.

Absent from most analyses of teacher development is any consideration of such concepts as intuition (see Atkinson and Claxton 2000), informal social learning (see McNally 2006) and the importance of context to professional development. Another dimension of teacher development which has hitherto received limited attention in CPD policy and practice is the emotional dimension: 'personal development for professional learning' (Malm 2009, p. 87). Fieman-Nemser (2006) rejects the traditional trajectory of teachers' professional development following ITE. She argues that such generic models provide little information about the type of learning and make assumptions about the pace and modes of teachers' learning. A wider conception of teacher development implies a more varied and flexible view of CPD in general.

The concept of CPD is difficult to define (Guest 2000 cited Friedman and Phillips 2004). While diverse interpretations might suffice for everyday purposes, it has been argued that inadequate, imprecise or non-existent definitions of CPD can make comparison of research studies difficult (Cordingley 2003). However, some authors of more recent articles appear to be attempting to address this issue with several adopting Day's (1999) definition of CPD as stated earlier.

This notion of CPD as 'all encompassing' is evident in the literature reviewed (Evans 2002, Friedman and Phillips 2004, Turner 2006). Although the needs of induction year teachers have been recognised for some time, recognition of the distinctive nature of EPD; that is teachers in the second to sixth year of their careers, appears to have developed within the last five years (Banks and Mayes 2001, Moor *et al.* 2005, Turner 2006). A number of the theoretical papers reviewed are based on earlier empirical studies within the context of formal CPD (Clarke and Hollingsworth, 2002, Friedman and Phillips 2004, Bubb and Earley 2006). However, there is growing interest in the contribution of informal learning to CPD across professions (Conlon 2003, Eraut 2004), in the teaching profession at all stages (Fraser *et al.* 2007) and EPD in particular (Turner 2006). The role of informal learning in teachers' EPD is currently under-represented in literature.

It therefore seems that considering teachers in years 2-6 to be one homogenous group is conceptually unviable. None of the empirical studies reviewed here covers that specific stage – most focusing on much earlier professional development, in particular years 1-3. This supports the earlier suggestion that the categorisation of years 2-6 in Scotland is derived from the structural design of the CPD framework rather than from any particular conceptualisation of teacher development.

Methodology

The empirical work of the project was designed in three incremental phases:

- Phase 1 – identification of year 2-6 teachers' CPD needs through Nominal Group Technique (NGT)
- Phase 2 – national survey of year 2-6 teachers, informed by the NGT data, and sent electronically to all schools in Scotland

- Phase 3 – Consultation with stakeholders on recommendations arising from phases 1 and 2

NGT – overview and rationale

NGT is a highly structured methodological process which claims to identify the shared views of a group on a specific issue. The process, developed by Delbeq *et al.* (1975), incorporates four distinct phases:

1. Independent generation of ideas in response to a stimulus question
2. Sharing (and listing) of these ideas in round-robin fashion with no discussion
3. Clarification of each individual response, and grouping of similar ideas together
4. Individual voting to prioritise ideas.

The highly structured nature of the process limits the influence of dominant individuals and also limits the influence of the researcher on the group's deliberations, as the researcher acts as facilitator only, following a strict protocol. It is also extremely time effective as the data is recorded and organised during the session, thereby also ensuring that the data and its organisation have been validated by the participants. The process allows for data to be gathered which reflects both the range of views and the relative strength of views, again making it a very time efficient process.

However, while proponents of the technique claim that it provides consensus of view (Delbeq *et al.* 1975), critics claim that the structured way in which views are gathered results in artificial consensus (Lomax and McLeman 1984). In the context of this study, the views gathered through the NGT process were used to inform the next phase of data collection, the national survey, thus limiting the potential drawbacks of considering the NGT data alone to represent a consensus view from the target population. For more detailed discussion of the NGT phase in this project see Kennedy & Clinton 2009,

NGT – data collection and analysis

During the month of June 2007, 10 NGT sessions were arranged with a total of 59 participants in four local authorities (Appendix 1 gives a breakdown of participant characteristics). A protocol was devised to ensure consistency of facilitation of each session, and the stimulus question chosen was: 'What kind of CPD would you like at this stage of your career?'

The wide-ranging responses to the stimulus question were clustered thematically, analysed and coded using the software programme NVivo. Coding categories were created and all comments made in response to the stimulus question were attributed to these codes or 'nodes' as they are called in NVivo. The coding process involved clustering similar items and a final total of 30 nodes or coding categories were devised as shown in Table 1 later in the article.

In addition to analysis of the range of items generated, the NGT structure also allows for the strength of view to be identified, the NGT sessions requiring participants to individually score their top 5 priority CPD needs. The item perceived to be of highest priority was given 5 points, followed by 4 points to the next highest priority item and so on. For all items in each node the total number of points awarded by participants was calculated as illustrated in column three in Table 1.

National survey

The data from the NGT sessions was used together with issues identified through the literature review to develop a questionnaire for the national survey. Using this information as a basis for the survey design gave the questions more immediate relevance to the target population. However, in an attempt not to restrict questions to issues identified by the NGT participants, survey respondents were also given the opportunity to add their own issues or to make narrative comment.

During the months of September and October 2007, the on-line survey (created on SurveyMonkey.com) was distributed electronically to year 2-6 teachers. An up-to-date database of registered teachers held by the GTCS indicated that the total number of registered teachers in the target group was 14,828; although not all of these teachers would necessarily be working in Scottish schools at present. These teachers were invited to participate in the survey via an email sent to all headteachers, who were requested to forward the invitation to relevant staff.

The number of responses received was 707. Assuming a target population of around 12,000 (allowing for teachers who were registered but not teaching), this represents a 5.9% response rate. As some responses could not be used due to respondents failing to answer important sections of the questionnaire, the useable sample size was 667 (see Appendix 2 for breakdown of respondent characteristics). With a target population of 12,000 and with 677 responses received, testing at a 95% confidence level produces a confidence level of plus or minus 3.5, representing a high level of confidence that the sample is representative of the wider population. Of this sample, 588 teachers were in a permanent teaching post and 89 were in a temporary post, while 639 teachers worked in the state sector and 37 worked in the independent sector.

The survey data was collated in SurveyMonkey, which organises quantitative data in tabular form, including average response ratings for the 'tick box' questions. Narrative responses were collated for each question and analysed thematically using a grounded approach, that is, categories were derived from the data, not imposed by the researcher.

Stakeholder consultation

Interim recommendations were developed as a result of the analysis of the NGT and survey data. The recommendations, and a brief explanation of how they were arrived at, were outlined in a briefing paper around which the consultation exercise was focused. The briefing paper and an invitation to take part in the consultation exercise were sent to head teachers in all schools in Scotland, all local authority CPD coordinators and relevant contacts in Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) and GTCS. Stakeholders were invited to attend one of two consultation seminars, or to take part in the exercise via email. The two seminars had nine and two participants respectively, and nine further participants took part in the consultation by email. While proportionately these numbers were small, it might reasonably be assumed that had the issue and the briefing paper cited a negative reaction then more responses would have been likely. In addition, the respondents represented all the key stakeholder groups, including a balance of headteachers from primary, secondary and state/independent schools as well as local authority CPD co-ordinators and representatives from HMIE and GTCS.

For each recommendation respondents were asked to consider:

- The extent to which the recommendation seemed appropriate according to their own experience of CPD for year 2-6 teachers
- How feasible/desirable it would be for schools to take the recommendation forward
- Other support (from local authorities or national organisations) which might be necessary in order to take the recommendation forward.

Responses from both of the seminars and the electronic exercise were collated under the original six recommendations.

Year 2-6 teachers' CPD needs and the relative priority of these needs

The central focus of the NGT session was on participants' CPD needs and the relative priority of these needs. Table 1 below shows the range of nodes, or categories, identified by NGT participants and also indicates the number of points awarded to individual items in each of these nodes during the voting process.

[Insert Table 1 here]

Relative priorities of CPD needs

To further refine the data gathered through the NGT process an analysis was made of the top priority items identified in each of the ten NGT sessions. For analytical purposes, the top three priority items were matched to their accompanying nodes to provide an overview of priority nodes. It should be noted that as two of the NGT sessions had two participants only, their priority scores have been excluded from this analysis due to the uneven weight this would give to their votes. An overview of top priority items by node is shown in Table 2 below:

[Insert Table 2 here]

Some of the survey questions were designed to test the representativeness of findings identified through the NGT process. One such question asked respondents to prioritise on a scale of 1-5 (where 1= 'not important at all' and 5 = 'very important'), a number of CPD needs which derived from the NGT analysis. Table 3 below presents the average rating allocated to each CPD need and also shows the percentage of respondents who indicated the CPD need as an important (4) or very important (5) priority.

[Insert Table 3 here]

Although the survey responses were largely supportive of findings from the NGT process, some differences should be noted. First, the top priority item identified in the survey concerned keeping up to date with teaching strategies rather than CPD relating to CfE. Second, subject or topic specific CPD and having a greater variety of modes of CPD delivery were prioritised more highly in the survey than in the NGT sessions. Although the format of the NGT session was possibly more likely to have stimulated more thoughtful responses than the survey, given that more participants were involved in responding to the survey (677 compared to 59), more weight should arguably be placed on the survey results. It should also be noted that the survey sample was more representative in terms of the year of teaching than the NGT sample which was dominated by teachers in years 2 and 3.

The ratings for this question were subsequently analysed by year of teaching service. While no striking differences were apparent, there were patterns in four of the items worthy of mention. The identification of CPD relating to CfE went up slightly with year of service, indicating that those teachers most recently qualified felt more confident with CfE (although they still rated it as being very much a CPD need). Perhaps the most striking pattern is the decrease by year of teaching service in the identification of behaviour management strategies as a CPD need. This pattern was also mirrored for the item on ‘additional training in support for learning’; that is, teachers with fewer years of service were more likely to identify this as a priority CPD need. The converse was true for CPD on leadership; those with more experience, arguably possibly beginning to look for leadership roles, were more likely to identify this as a CPD priority.

In summary, CPD needs and priorities identified through both the NGT and the survey data related principally to:

- Keeping up-to-date with teaching strategies
- Additional support needs
- National priorities, especially CfE
- Subject specific development
- ICT
- Behaviour management
- Career progression.

Barriers to participation in CPD

The survey contained two questions about barriers, one based on 5-point rating scale where 1=not a barrier at all, and 5=very much a barrier, and one which asked for narrative responses. Table 4 below presents the average rating for each potential barrier and also indicates the percentage of respondents who rated each item as either 4 (slight barrier) or 5 (very much a barrier).

[Insert Table 4 here]

As can be seen there were no items which received an average rating of 3 or more, indicating that in general terms, respondents did not feel strongly about barriers to their participation in CPD. Financial cost was the most frequently cited barrier (32%), followed by a lack of flexibility or variation in local authority CPD provision (28%) and geographical location (18%).

Responses to this question were then analysed by year of teaching service. As might be expected, those respondents in the immediate post-induction year (year 2) were more likely to identify a lack of stable employment as a barrier. The ratings for this item decreased the longer teachers worked (with the exception of year 6 which showed a slight increase on year 5 respondents). As might also be expected, there was a very slight increase in the identification of ‘CPD which is not directly linked to career progression’ as a barrier corresponding to length of teaching experience.

A further open-ended question was asked, but the majority of responses here merely expanded on issues already detailed in the rating scale question. A number of responses to the open-ended question reflected respondents’ frustration with school policy on CPD entitlement or the CPD culture within the school management. The majority of these responses referred to staffing problems caused by teachers attending external CPD during the school day, specifically, lack of class cover (n=19): *‘it is*

difficult to attend courses because cover in schools is so tight it becomes more hassle than it's worth!

Barriers that respondents had encountered that were attributed to school management were varied, and in a few cases reflected a perception that school management could be unsupportive, or indeed obstructive.

In summary, the survey did not reveal particularly strong views about barriers to participation in CPD, but those barriers that were identified included:

- Cost of courses
- Arranging appropriate cover to be released from class commitments in order to participate in CPD activities
- Lack of variety in CPD 'provision'
- School cultures, including a lack of support from school management
- Time constraints
- Timing of CPD events
- Regional differences and limited availability or choice
- Previous negative experiences.

While the construction of the NGT and survey instruments attempted to avoid leading respondents to think of CPD as courses or events which are 'provided', the majority of responses in relation to barriers seemed to refer to CPD 'provision', that is, courses, seminars and planned events. This is perhaps in itself indicative of a barrier: an imbalanced perception of CPD which privileges formal, planned events over informal or unplanned activities.

Recommendations and stakeholder consultation

The analysis of NGT and survey data led to the development of six strategic recommendations which were detailed in the briefing paper sent to consultees. This section outlines each of these six key recommendations in turn, providing a summary of consultees' reactions to each.

Recommendation 1 acknowledged that the years 2-6 category is borne out of structural concerns and does not signify one homogenous developmental stage, concluding that it is therefore vital to recognise that there will not be one solution to supporting effective CPD for all year 2-6 teachers. The crux of the recommendation stated that year 2-6 teachers have different needs and work in different contexts, therefore differentiated CPD opportunities should be provided.

There was overwhelming support for this position, with acknowledgement that it applies to all teachers and not just those in years 2-6. Some of the comments focused on the induction/year 2 transition in particular, suggesting that it could be more productive in many cases. Mentoring and collaborative activities, while the focus of recommendation 4, were seen to be important ways in supporting differentiated CPD needs. It was noted that creating a framework which was supportive yet flexible enough to meet the range of CPD needs would be a real challenge, and that it should recognise the need for progression in addition to differentiation.

On the positive side, one of the respondents remarked on the enthusiasm of teachers in the early years of their careers, and their openness to change and development. Another group acknowledged the need to ensure that leadership development is supported in years 2-6.

One respondent felt that there needed to be better cooperation between schools and local authorities in supporting CPD, while another highlighted the importance of skill and time in ensuring effective leadership of CPD at school level. The potential tension between meeting school and personal development needs was also highlighted here. Other issues raised were the potential for universities to offer cross-authority CPD to widen the range of available opportunities and the need to ensure that teachers in years 2-6 could gather evidence of their CPD that might be used in claiming accreditation for prior learning (APL) for Chartered Teacher, for example.

Recommendation 2 focused on year 2-6 teachers not in permanent full-time employment, noting that they may have particular difficulties in accessing appropriate CPD. This recommendation suggested that local authorities and schools should work towards developing systems for identifying and supporting year 2-6 teachers not in stable employment.

Most of the responses to this recommendation expressed strong agreement with the sentiment. It was suggested that while the responsibility for supporting the CPD of non-permanent staff was a shared one, there might usefully be some national planning to formalise a solution to the problem. Funding CPD for non-permanent supply teachers was identified as a concern.

One response suggested that it was already 'feasible' to offer CPD to supply teachers who are in the school, but it should be recognised that this is only a partial solution as these teachers are still likely to have difficulties in planning a coherent programme of development and in accessing collegiate support such as access to PRD.

The importance of addressing this issue was highlighted in terms of its impact on improving the retention of teachers.

Recommendation 3 highlighted the importance of the transition between the induction year and year 2, suggesting that the final profile completed at the end of the induction year should be seen as a key document in supporting a smooth transition. It went on to state that thereafter it is crucial that early career teachers have a positive experience of the PRD process, suggesting that there might be implications here for the development of reviewers' skills in supporting this process.

A number of responses stressed the importance of training for reviewers and reviewees in the PRD process, as well as for mentors in general (although this point is also addressed under recommendation 4). School ethos and relationships, and leadership of CPD were also mentioned again here as being fundamental to effective PRD. There were several comments relating to the link between the final profile and the PRD process – suggesting that it could be more effective.

Recommendation 4 centred on the evidence from participants in the research project, together with evidence from the literature, indicating that continuing mentoring in some form into the early professional development stage would be valuable. It suggested, however, that mentors need to be committed, well-trained and endorse a collaborative learning approach.

This recommendation again met with the agreement of respondents in the consultation exercise, with appropriate training, support and time being seen as crucial. However, questions were raised over 'standards' for mentors and how one might identify a 'good' mentor. Other comments centred on issues of mentor selection and motivation, and the adoption of a collaborative approach to mentoring, that is,

that the mentoring function does not have to be carried out by one person alone. Recognising mentors appropriately (financially and professionally) was also raised as an issue. Interestingly, one response suggested that links between mentors and leaders might be explored, suggesting that mentors often go on to become school leaders.

Recommendation 5 highlighted the message that year 2-6 teachers want CPD which is relevant to their own classroom context and which supports active experimentation, with a particular focus on: ICT; assessment; subject-related work; pupil support; extra-curricular opportunities; career progression; and national initiatives (in particular CfE).

While not disputing these perceived needs, several of the respondents felt that the focus on the classroom was somewhat narrow, stressing the importance of CPD relating to school-wide and national initiatives too. While the data from phases 1 and 2 showed that the year 2-6 teachers recognise these wider CPD agendas, the priorities identified in both our empirical data and the literature review, focused on CPD which would have a direct and immediate impact on the classroom context. It appears that the issue is perhaps that the balance between these different agendas needs to be discussed and agreed explicitly. There are links here to the tension discussed earlier between personal and school (or national) needs.

Recommendation 6 suggested that informal learning, and the associated emotional and social elements, should be recognised and be made more explicit, acknowledging that CPD for early career teachers should involve engagement with colleagues, not just courses, for example: mentoring; observing; peer coaching; and networking. It highlighted that collaborative CPD in pairs or small groups has been shown to have a greater impact on professional development and learning than individually oriented forms of CPD, and is valued by year 2-6 teachers, concluding that opportunities to work in pairs/small groups should be encouraged.

This recommendation was endorsed fully in all responses. The positive effects of collaborative CPD were noted, with respondents suggesting that ‘creative solutions’ to CPD should be found, and that action research was one useful way forward. Working within existing learning communities was also mentioned as a feasible possibility.

Concluding comments

In addition to the comments discussed in the section above, participants in the consultation sessions were also keen to point out that much of what was being suggested as desirable CPD for teachers in years 2-6 was actually desirable CPD for teachers across the career spectrum. In particular, issues such as the importance of collaborative and interactive CPD are also highlighted in recent UK-wide research as being a key part of effective CPD (Bolam *et al.*, 2005; Cordingley *et al.*, 2005; Fraser *et al.*, 2007; James *et al.*, 2006). The need for greater recognition of informal learning is also a key focus in recent research into professional learning (Eraut *et al.*, 2004; McNally, 2006; Turner, 2006).

Finally, while it is useful to research the specific needs of teachers at specific career stages, it is also important not to lose sight of the teachers within these career stages as individuals with individual professional and personal needs, working in a variety of different contexts. The focus on individual needs, the variety of work contexts and the increased recognition of the value of collaborative and informal CPD

seems to be providing a challenge for the rather more ordered and technical implementation of the current standards-based CPD framework.

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